

Date: January 11, 2022

To: Growth Management Citizens Committee (and members of the public)

From: Steve Linke, Traffic & Mobility Commission representative

Subject: Open space and parks

After considering feedback from staff, the committee, and the public, below are my proposed committee recommendations on “open space” and “parks.”

Note first that growth management as envisioned when it was first adopted in 1986 is no longer possible, because the main enforcement mechanism (a development moratorium) is no longer allowed. Therefore, I would suggest that the proposed open space and parks standards are not really **minimum standards** that **must** be met **immediately**, but rather **goals** to which **best efforts** should be applied **over time**.

In addition, while **developers** should continue to be required to **dedicate a portion of their property** and/or **pay their fair shares in fees**, it is evident that the limited resources available solely from them through growth management will typically be insufficient. Accordingly, the **city** needs to **help fund** achievement of the goals with an emphasis on deficient areas.

Given these paradigm shifts in growth management, I think our committee can recommend more meaningful open space and parks standards/goals and ignore much of the noise about the inability to guarantee compliance and the other naysaying regarding the ability to pay for and build these important projects. We also can recommend strategies to help prioritize the projects.

Open Space

Proposed Goal: “Fifteen percent of the total land area in the Local Facility Management Zone (LFMZ) exclusive of environmentally constrained non-developable land for all LFMZs, including the previously exempted LFMZs 1-10 and 16.”

- Developers in the deficient zones shall make fair-share contributions toward the 15% open space goal by dedicating property (either unilaterally or through a developer agreement) and/or paying an open-space in-lieu fee.
- As part of ongoing growth management monitoring, the City shall:
 1. keep the open space in-lieu fee updated to reflect current needs and costs;
 2. identify deficient LFMZs;
 3. maintain an inventory of candidate parcels (undeveloped or underutilized) within the deficient LFMZs and proximal LFMZs that could be acquired to help address identified deficiencies;
 4. prioritize projects based on the magnitude of the deficiencies; and
 5. account for projected future loss of open space due to sea-level rise.

Parks

Note that 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is apparently a State of California minimum, that multiple adjacent cities seem to have a goal of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, and that cities including Oceanside have conducted “parkshed analyses” to identify and prioritize areas that lack sufficient parks.

Proposed Goal: “4 acres of dedicated parkland per 1,000 population with all residences within a 10-minute walk of a park.” [The **4-acre** goal number could be flexible up or down based on what is counted as parkland (see below), and the **10-minute** walk number could be flexible.]

- Developers shall make fair-share contributions toward the 4 acre per 1,000 residents parkland goal by dedicating property (either unilaterally or through a developer agreement) and/or paying a park in-lieu fee.
- As part of ongoing growth management monitoring, the City shall:
 1. keep the park in-lieu fee updated to reflect current needs and costs;
 2. identify deficient areas (i.e., quadrants with less than 4 acres per 1,000 residents and LFMZs with residences greater than a 10-minute walk from a park);
 3. maintain an inventory of candidate parcels (undeveloped or underutilized) within the deficient areas that could be acquired and developed to help address the deficiencies;
 4. prioritize projects based on the magnitude of the deficiencies; and
 5. account for projected future loss or parkland due to sea-level rise.

What should be counted as parkland?

- **Areas inaccessible to people:** Such acreage (e.g., protected habitat) should not count as city parkland, even if it is contiguous with a park (e.g., Poinsettia, La Costa Canyon, Carillo, Hidden Valley, and Veterans Memorial Parks).
- **Veterans Memorial Park:** Even the accessible acreage of Veterans Memorial Park should apply only to the northwest quadrant where it is located—not all four quadrants—because, despite its size, the city modified its role from a regional park to a neighborhood park.
- **Private development parks:** This acreage is meant to compensate for developments that do not provide adequate yard space for their individual dwelling units and is restricted to members only, so it likely should not count as city parkland.
- **Schoolyards:** Those that are inaccessible for major parts of the day or are subject to being withdrawn from public use by schools likely should not be counted as city parkland, or only a portion of the acreage should be counted.
- **Golf courses and trails:** These are counted as parkland in Oceanside, but Oceanside has a goal of 5 acres per 1,000 residents. Also, it could be argued that golf courses are really not accessible to all people. These are debatable.
- **Beaches; Agua Hedionda lagoon inner basin:** These types of areas do not seem to be routinely considered parkland in other jurisdictions, but these also are debatable.

From: [Diane Nygaard](#)
To: [Growth Management Committee](#)
Subject: Agenda item # 1- Parks and Open Space Performance Standards
Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2023 9:29:27 PM

Honorable Chair and Committee Members

There are three critical performance standards that will have the greatest impact on the future residents of Carlsbad- traffic,parks and open space.

These are the three areas that are most directly connected with everyone's sense of place, connectedness and health. They truly will define the character of this community.

At your last meeting you raised some concerns about the traffic standards and directed staff to do some more work on them- thank you!

At your next meeting you will be addressing parks and open space. The issues with these standards can't be addressed in a sentence or two. Nor can changes to the standards be implemented overnight. Your charge is to make recommendations. Not every detail needs to be defined in order to do that. You need to establish the direction, and a process.

We ask you to consider the following as you make your recommendations:

Open Space Standard

- Has there been an effort to ensure equitable distribution of open space- the 15% for each area of the city?

11 of 25 Local Facility Management Zones were "exempted" from the standards,failed to meet them in 1986 when they were adopted, and fail to meet them today.

- Was the promise from 1986 kept- vote yes on the growth management plan and ensure that Carlsbad will always be a city with 40% open space?

Staff acknowledges that at full buildout the city will not keep this promise and in fact has no commitment to even try to do so.

- Is there a need for more open space?

Years of conservation planning have documented the need to preserve more of our natural and working lands.

- Are there any opportunities left to add open space?

Of course there are. Look at the recent conversion of the old Buena Vista Reservoir to a park. That was city owned land that sat unused for years in a neighborhood that was short open space.

- Will open space be lost as a result of Sea Level Rise(SLR) ?

Yes- that is already well documented. The time to plan to replace those future lost lands is now.

Recommendation

Keep the staff recommended performance standard of 15% unconstrained open space for each LFMZ. But remove the exemption from the 11 zones and plan now to replace the open space land that will be lost to SLR and what is needed to enhance biodiversity. Establish a process for gradually bringing the zones that were short changed up to par with the rest of the city . Allow some flexibility in how this is applied. Things like adjacent zones may need to share open space or boundaries may need to be adjusted to account for the coastal areas that will be inundated by SLR or improvements to things like wildlife movement corridors. This would ensure equitable distribution of open space and meet the promise for 40% open space that was made in 1986.

Park Standard

- Was the community adequately informed that the majority of future parks for all quadrants would be at one park- Veteran's Memorial Park ?

This was one of the least known and understood, but most consequential decisions that hid in plain sight for years.

- Does the current standard of 3 acres of parkland/1,000 residents/quadrant address the needs of today and for decades to come?

Consider the 100's of people in dense, new multi- family dwelling units, with no back yards, and no parks within easy walking or biking distance.

- Shouldn't there be a coastal access park serving the southern half of the city?

The residents of Ponto have well documented the need for this. The two southern quadrants of the city were the most impacted by putting what should have been their park at Veteran's park, in the northern half of the city. The time to address this is now.

Recommendation

Keep the performance standard for 3 acres of parkland /1,000 residents /quadrant. But add to it two new requirements. First, an additional requirement for up to an additional .5 acres of parkland /1,000 residents /quadrant to address the need for accessible neighborhood parks. This is typically done through evaluating the 10 minute walk or 15 min bike ride distance from each residential neighborhood. If that neighborhood is a master planned development that includes parks that serve those residents that could be counted for those residents. But it is most important to ensure that those existing residents without such private parks and future new residents also have accessible neighborhood parks.

Secondly, add a requirement to develop a coastal access park serving the southern half of the city, preferably at Ponto. The mechanics to make this happen will take some time- but the result will benefit the entire community for decades to come.

Thank you for considering these comments. The current and future residents of Carlsbad are counting on you.

Diane Nygaard
On behalf of Preserve Calavera

PS. It is very disappointing that the notice of this important meeting - at a non standard time, and

not on the regular meeting schedule was sent out less than 48 hours in advance.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **City of Carlsbad** <planning@carlsbadca.gov>

Date: Mon, Jan 9, 2023 at 5:46 PM

Subject: Carlsbad Growth Management Committee meets 1/11

To: <dnygaard3@gmail.com>



The [Carlsbad Tomorrow Growth Management Citizens Committee](#) will meet Wednesday evening to continue the next phase of its work to help the city develop a new plan for how to manage growth. Specific topics up for discussion on Wednesday will include:

- Open space
- Parks
- Climate Action Plan

- Environmental sustainability - renewable energy and local electric power generation
- Water quality and stormwater

Background

- Since last March, the resident-led committee has been learning about and discussing 11 existing [“performance standards.”](#) Performance standards refer to the level of service that needs to be maintained to ensure Carlsbad’s excellent quality of life.
- Developers either pay fees toward or build the infrastructure and amenities needed to maintain these standards based on the new residents who will live in their housing.
- The current standards were first put in place in the 80s.
- The committee is helping to update the standards to reflect the community’s current needs and priorities.
- Now that the group has discussed the existing standards, they are discussing and developing recommendations for future standards.

The full agenda and staff report are posted on the city's [website](#). The meeting starts at 5 p.m. at the Faraday Administration Center (1635 Faraday Ave.), but you can also [watch live online](#) or see a recording after the fact. Details on how you can participate can be found on the [meeting agenda](#).

The committee is expected to meet through early spring to look at different options and ideas. Their recommendations about what a new plan should consider will then be presented to the City Council for its consideration.

More information

- [Growth Management in Carlsbad](#)
- [Growth Management Committee webpage](#)

Quick Links

- [Meeting Calendar](#)
- [Laws & Policies](#)
- [Public Records](#)
- [City Charter](#)
- [Boards & Commissions](#)



Contact Us

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From: [Lynne](#)
To: [Growth Management Committee](#)
Subject: Park and Open Space Performance Standards Comments
Date: Wednesday, January 11, 2023 5:57:04 AM

Carlsbad Committee Members,

I am concerned regarding the City of Carlsbad's workarounds to meet open space and park requirements. In particular I would like the City to:

- Keep the 15% per LFMZ, but eliminate exemptions so all zones are treated the same;
- Inventory all vacant/underutilized land for potential open space;
- Remove the exemption on the 11 LFMZ's and develop transition plans to gradually increase open space so that each part of the city has an equitable share of open space- as was promised in 1986.

Additionally, I don't feel that golf courses, the beach and school yards should count as accessible park or open space areas.

I feel confident that the City has its citizen's wellbeing in mind when trying to make Carlsbad a liveable, comfortable as well as profitable city. I'm looking forward to further improvements in citizen access to hiking, biking and walking trails in natural settings in our beautiful city. I also want to see growth in neighborhood parks that are easily accessed throughout our city.

Thank you in advance for your attention to my concerns.

Sincerely,
Lynne

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